- AN APPRECIATION -

The Woman's Board of Home Missions, before entering upon the increased responsibilities of an incorporated body, desires to acknowledge the very valuable services rendered to it for thirty-seven years by the Board of Home Missions.

The school work among the exceptional population assigned to the Woman's Executive Committee by the General Assembly, December 18th, 1877, was comparatively a small undertaking and simple in management, but it was before the days when there were many organized efforts by women and few women had had business experience. This made the relation of the Woman's Executive Committee, the name of the organization for eighteen years, to the Board of Home Missions very dependent and necessarily educative in character. Dr. Kendall, the first secretary under whom the new organization commenced work, assured the little group of Presbyterian women of his hearty support and co-operation. His attitude to the Committee was much as that of a father and child. Patient instruction, watchful care, continual encouragement will always be associated with his administration; and better than the instruction was his ability to create in the inexperienced women self confidence.

"Dr. Kendall really brought us up," said one of that

first Committee, and it is equally true that Mrs. James brought us up with deference and obedience to the Assembly's Board. "Loyalty to the Board" was one of her re-iterated maxims, and when her mantle fell upon her ~~young~~ associate Mrs. Bennett, the same policy was pursued.

Thus in all the years since woman's work was organized for Home Missions, there has been nothing but harmony between the two Boards, and on the part of the Woman's Board there has always been a feeling of comfort and assurance that while she had such solid backing as the Home Board nothing very harmful could come to her.

When Dr. Roberts became secretary his interest in the Woman's Executive Committee was no less than that of Dr. Kendall, but the dependence was greatly changed. The women had advanced in knowledge and grown in experience and the relation was more of that of client and attorney. The majority of the business of the Woman's Executive Committee was settled within their own jurisdiction and only the difficult cases were taken to Dr. Roberts for consultation, and those having occasion to interview him remember how cheerfully and gladly he gave his time for counsel and advice.

The names of Dr. Thompson and Dr. Dixon will bring a hearty response from many members of the present Board. Their long term of service has meant years of association and communion together until the mutual tie that binds is strong and enduring. Their administration as those of

the preceding secretaries brought a change of relationship between the two Boards. In 1897 the Woman's Executive Committee had become the Woman's Board of Home Missions with extended work and added responsibilities. For a time it meant the support of missionary teachers, schools, Bible readers, evangelists and medical missionaries; the erection, equipment, and maintenance of necessary buildings, with the defusion of information. This made in some cases the line of work of both Boards similar, and the relationship was the deliberation of partners in an inspiring work; and from Dr. Thompson and Dr. Dixon the Woman's Board has always received consideration, sympathetic interest, candor in methods of action, a spirit of concession and compromise, which has resulted in delightful unity and harmony.

While we thus record separately a tribute to these beloved secretaries, who were the medium of necessary business to their Board, there is a sense in which there is a combined obligation to all of them and the entire Board for the honor of this hour, - the honor of such a degree of confidence that by the advice of the General Assembly the Woman's Board has become an incorporated body.

Thirty-seven years ago, the separate Christian work of women was not in general favor in the Presbyterian Church. But the constant support of these secretaries, by spoken and written word, when visiting churches and the General Assembly has been an important factor that has almost entirely eliminated the early objection. Dr. Kendall's leaflet, "Help Those

Women", was scattered far and wide, and an examination of the bound volumes of the proceedings of the General Assembly will show that in every report presented by the secretaries of the Home Board there is endorsement and commendation of the work of the Woman's Board. Thus year after year, the secretaries have helped to mold the opinion of the members of our highest ecclesiastical court, until they have been prepared to offer us their complete confidence.

Another obligation to the Board of Home Missions has been its cordial assistance in financial embarrassment. It has always been an accomodating and willing banker, tiding us over more than one difficult place, and this temporary assistance has been sincerely appreciated.

From the treasurers, Mr. Eaton and Mr. Olin, we have recognized many courtesies. Both treasurers have been most thoughtful for our office comfort. From the first room seven-by-nine in Center Street, they have bettered our accomodations with every change of location, and this thoughtfulness often without any suggestion but their own desire to have us comfortably situated.

Dr. Dodge, for many years the President of the Board of Home Missions, has been a most faithful and valuable friend to the Woman's Board. In ways known and unknown, so quietly has he rendered assistance, that he will always be remembered as one of its warmest friends and generous supporters.

Nor do we forget the spring conferences,- an occasion of cordial greetings and making plans for the future year's work,

when both Boards have sat around the long table, a veritable united family. And as the years have gone by and seats around that table have become vacant and Dr. Kendall, Dr. Roberts, Dr. George F. McAfee, Mrs. James, Mrs. Pierson, Mrs. Finks, have joined the cloud of witnesses, we have recalled their names and labors of love, verifying the assurance, that "the righteousness shall be in everlasting remembrance".

It would be impossible to summarize all that the Board of Home Missions has been to the Woman's Board - the wide sympathy it has given our work; the liberal care for all our interests; the good judgment; the wise counsel; the encouragement; the comradeship; the inspiration of association; the genuine exultations in our successes - all these, and more, will cause us often to hark back with gratitude, honor and affection to the Board of Home Missions.

Respectfully submitted:

Mrs. S.B.Brownell,
Mrs. W.E.Honeyman
Mrs. John F. Pingry
Mrs. John Sinclair
Mrs. Calvin B. Walker

May eleventh

1915

INCORPORATION.

During the past year, in obedience to the direction of the General Assembly, of 1914, steps were taken to incorporate the Woman's Board of Home Missions under an act of the Legislature of the State of New York.

An outline of the developments leading to this important action is appropriate in this report.

In February, 1914, the Executive Commission of the General Assembly took action recommending that the Woman's Board of Home Missions should be erected as an incorporated body. This action originated, so far as is known, in the Executive Commission. At the session when the action was taken, the President of the Woman's Board of Home Missions had been before the Executive Commission in regard to the budgets of the women's organizations, and during a recess a member of the Commission said to her, "We are going to incorporate the Woman's Board." As no official message was received, Mrs. Bennett decided that the matter had been dropped. In April of that same year, however, she received a letter from Mr. Charles T. Thompson, a member of the Executive Commission, asking whether the Woman's Board would be willing to be incorporated in the state of New Jersey and under the title "The Woman's Home Mission Board." To this letter she replied that she was not prepared to answer these questions with any degree of finality as she felt that the question of the incorporation itself was still an open one. No further message came prior to the meeting of the General Assembly in May, which took favorable action on the recommendation of the Executive Commission regarding incorporation of the Woman's Board, voting that the matter be referred "to the Executive Commission to confer with the Board of Home Missions and the Woman's Board and that after the conference if the way be clear the Executive Commission be empowered to proceed with the incorporation."

In September of 1914, the Executive Commission met at Atlantic City. At this time Mrs. Bennett and Miss Hyatt, the Vice-President of the Woman's Board, were in attendance, there having been received the docket of the Executive Commission showing that the incorporation of the Woman's Board would be considered. There were many informal conferences with members of the Executive Commission, but the Boards' representatives were not called before the Commission. That body, however, referred the whole matter to a committee consisting of three from the Board of Home Missions, three from the Woman's Board, and three from the Executive Commission; said committee to consider details and present the proposed Act to the Executive Commission in February, 1915.

Owing to the death of Mr. Charles T. Thompson, chairman of the group from the Executive Commission, and the death of Mr. John F. Parsons, chairman of the committee from the Board of Home Missions, no meetings were held until January, when there was called an informal meeting of the Committee for discussion. No motions were considered. Later, a number of meetings were held at which were present the members of the committees from the two Boards, the three sub-committees and later the joint committee having agreed upon a charter which was presented to the Executive Commission by the chairman of the committee, Mr. George V. Massey, and approved on Thursday, February 25th.